ISLAM ON SLAVERY

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SINCE the earliest days of man's struggles on this earth there have been conquerors and conquered, and it has ever been the privilege and right of the former to impose conditions which had to be complied with by the latter. *Væ victis*—the weaker go to the wall and have to obey the stronger and cleverer in life's battle. Man, being the cleverer, though not the physical equal to many animals, gradually brought into subjection and applied to his use such powerful creatures as the horse, the camel, and the elephant. Being to a great extent a gregarious creature, man found he could combine with others and form societies which enabled him to undertake work quite beyond the power of any individual unit. When such societies or combinations began to multiply, it was inevitable that there should be conflicts for the possession of desirable things such as land, cattle, labourers, etc. In this way arose slavery. The conquered were used as chattels, they passed under the yoke of their masters and entered into a thraldom in which they lost their individuality, and there is no doubt they were often treated with all manner of ill-usage.

Religions, civilizations, and legislations came into being; but there was no alteration, or even mitigation, as regards the main principles of slavery or the absolute power of the stronger over the weaker.

The Roman Law upheld the constitution of slavery whilst allowing manumission in certain cases, but did nothing to ameliorate the actual condition of the slaves. It is not necessary here to go into the cruelties practised in the days of Rome, as they are well known. History tells us that the Greeks and ancient Germans recognized and practised both kinds of slavery—predial servitude as well as household slavery.

In the case of India, the Aryan race on their invasion reduced the conquered inhabitants to a condition worse than

slavery, so that the very shadow of the vanquished, who were called *śudra* in their language, was held to bring a curse on those on whom the shadow happened to fall. Even to this very day in the State of Travancore, Southern India, roads constructed for persons of high caste are not allowed to be traversed by the *sudra*.

As Syed Ameer Ali points out in his illuminating work, *The Spirit of Islam*, two forms of slavery were practised among the Hebrews from the commencement of their history. The Israelite slave, given into bondage as a punishment for crime, or for the payment of a debt, occupied a higher position than a slave of alien birth. . . . Christianity, as a system and a creed, raised no protest against slavery, enforced no rule, inculcated no principle for the mitigation of the evil. . . . The teachings of Jesus, as portrayed in the Christian traditions, contained nothing expressive of disapproval of bondage. On the contrary, Christianity enjoined on the slave absolute submission to the will or his or her proprietor.

It found slavery a recognized institution of the empire; it adopted the system without any endeavour to mitigate its baneful character, or to promote its gradual abolition, or to improve the status of slaves. Under the civil law, slaves were mere chattels. They remained so under the Christian domination. . . . The introduction of the religion of Jesus into Europe affected human chattelhood only in its relation to the priesthood. A slave could become free by adopting monachism, if not claimed within three years. But in other respects slavery flourished as much and in as varied shapes as under the pagan domination. The Digest, compiled under a Christian emperor, pronounced slavery a constitution of the law of nature; and the code fixed the maximum price of slaves according to the professions for which they were intended. Marriages between slaves were not legal; and between the slave and the free were prohibited under severe penalties.[1] The natural result was unrestrained concubinage, which even the clergy recognized and practised.[2] . . .

[1] One of the punishments was, if a free woman married a slave she was to be put to death and the slave burned alive (*Latin Christianity*, vol. ii. By Milman).

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 369.

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Christianity had failed utterly in abolishing slavery or alleviating its evils. The Church itself held slaves, and recognized in explicit terms the lawfulness of this baneful institution. Under its influence the greatest civilians of Europe had upheld slavery, and have insisted upon its usefulness as preventing the increase of pauperism and theft.[1] . . .

It may be said that Jesus could not be held responsible for the practice of slavery in Christendom, but the institution got its permission and support from the Judaic Law, and as Christ was a staunch observer of the said Law, and so never said anything against it, he must be considered to have given it his sanction; and St. Paul recognizes it, as he enjoins kindness to slaves.

For centuries in Christian countries slavery continued to be practised with all its attendant cruelties, till the climax was reached in the United States of America and elsewhere when enlightenment and public feelings of humanity began to prevail. It was early in the eighteenth century that England began to take an interest in freeing the slaves, and this interest became crystallized in the popular belief that baptism conferred freedom. Slaves were brought into England from the West Indies and went through the ceremony of baptism, obtaining as godfathers respectable citizens; but in 1729 an opinion of the then Attorney-General was procured to the effect that neither residence in Great Britain nor baptism conferred freedom on a slave, and that he might be legally compelled to return to slavery, in spite of his influential godfather.

This noble movement towards the abolition of slavery received its greatest opposition from the Church, and this should not cause much surprise, seeing that every scientific discovery and every advance towards higher enlightenment has been bitterly and cruelly opposed by sacerdotal interference—what may be called "Church-craft" has ever proved to be the chief stumbling-block to true advancement. As I have said elsewhere, there is nothing more valuable than the truth, and it is to the everlasting shame of humanity that

[1] Pufendorff, *Law of Nature and Nations*, Bk. VI, c. 3, s. 10.

in all the past ages sacerdotal jugglery has been permitted to hoodwink the credulous, frighten the timid, and disguise the truth. Depend upon it, there is no stronger ally to true religion than Science, which is ever searching for the TRUTH, and so approximating towards an understanding of the divine Mysteries which are at present behind the veil.

Turning to Islam, we recognize in it the first religion that dealt a death-blow to the very roots of this ignoble institution of slavery, which would have been completely abolished through its influence but for its being so deeply rooted in all the nations of the world. Islam, however, laid down principles which cannot fail to approximate towards a vastly improved state of affairs. As a wise man once said: "It is always easy to imagine perfection, but it is only possible to achieve improvement."

In the early days of his ministry, Muhammad could not command wealth enough to purchase the freedom of the slaves. He, however, preached the religion of liberating slaves and made their emancipation a virtue of great merit. We read the following in the Qur-án: "It is not righteousness that you turn your faces towards the east and the west, but righteousness is this, that one should believe in Allah and the last day, and the Angels and the Book and the Prophets, and give away wealth out of love for Him, to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for (*emancipation of*) *the captives*," etc.[1]

"And what will make you comprehend what the uphill road is? It is the *setting free of the slaves* or the giving of food in the day of hunger to an orphan," etc.[2]

Again, the Qur-án lays down that a part of the public funds should be spent in purchasing the freedom of the slaves. "Alms are only for the poor and the needy and the officials appointed over them and those whose hearts are made to incline (to Truth) and emancipation of captives and those in debt and in the way of Allah, and the wayfarer."[3]

No other revealed Book says anything on the subject, and no other Prophet, including Jesus, inspired his followers to

[1] The Holy Qur-án, ii. 177. [2] *Ibid.*, xc. 11–16.
[3] *Ibid.*, ix. 60.

emancipate those they held in bondage, or mitigate their sufferings. With reference to the unique pronouncements of the Prophet Muhammad as to the freeing of slaves, I may now quote the following from Ameer Ali [1] :—

" The Prophet exhorted his followers repeatedly in the name of God to enfranchise slaves, ' than which there was not an act more acceptable to God.' He ruled that for certain sins of omission the penalty should be the manumission of slaves. He ordered that slaves should be allowed to purchase their liberty by the wages of their services ; and that in case the unfortunate beings had no present means of gain, and wanted to earn in some other employment enough for that purpose, they should be allowed to leave their masters on an agreement to that effect. . . . In certain contingencies, it was provided that the slaves should become enfranchised without the interference, and even against the will, of their master. The contract or agreement in which the least doubt was discovered was construed most favourably in the interest of the slave, and the slightest promise on the part of the master was made obligatory for the purposes of enfranchisement. He placed the duty of kindness towards the slave on the same footing with the claims of kindred and neighbours and fellow-travellers and wayfarers ; encouraged manumission to the freest extent and therewith the gift of a ' portion of that wealth which God has given you ' ; and prohibited sensual uses of a master's power over a slave, with the promise of divine mercy to the wronged. To free a slave is the expiation for ignorantly slaying a believer and for certain forms of untruth. The whole tenor of Muhammad's teaching made ' permanent chattelhood ' or caste impossible ; and it is simply an ' abuse of words ' to apply the word ' slavery,' in the English sense, to any status known to the legislation of Islam."

The farewell address of Muhammad is a great charter of liberty. It runs thus :—

" O ye people. Hearken unto my words. I know not if ever I shall speak to you here again.

[1] *Spirit of Islam*, p 262.

" Your lives and your goods are sacred among you until the end of time.

" You must one day appear before Allah to give an account of your doings.

" Let every man be faithful.

" No more vengeance shall be allowed for bloodshed as in the days of your idolatry.

" Ye husbands have rights, and ye wives, ye have rights. Husbands, love your wives and cherish them. You have taken them as your wives under the security of God. Treat them well.

" As to your slaves—male and female—feed them with what you eat yourself, and clothe them with what you wear. If you cannot keep them, or they commit any fault, discharge them. They are God's people like unto you, and you are to be kind to them.

" I leave you a law that shall always preserve you from error ; a law clear and positive—a Book dictated from Heaven.

" Listen to my words and fix them in your minds.

" Verily Muslims are brothers. They form one fraternity. Take not that which belongs to thy brother until he gives it to thee, of his own free will.

" Beware of injustice and expropriation."

These ordinances were not meant to remain only in books, but they were translated into action.

In the Meccan life of the Prophet no chances of making many slaves presented themselves. His own slaves he released, and his friend and follower, Abu Bekr, freed a large number of his slaves and purchased a number in order to set them free. When the Prophet came to Medina and the conditions of warfare began, the following verse was revealed which totally abolished slavery of the old type and made war-captivity the only kind of slavery—if it may be called such—permissible in Islam : " It is not fit for a prophet that he should take captives unless he has fought and triumphed." [1] The verse lays down the condition under which a person forfeits his liberty at the hand of another. In other words, the verse abolished slavery and allowed Muslims to make

[1] The Holy Qur-án, viii. 67.

war-prisoners, and this only so long as the war lasted, as the following shows: "So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite their necks, until when you have overcome them, then make them prisoners and then either set them free as a favour or let them ransom (themselves), until the war terminates." [1]

It must always be borne in mind that the Prophet was ever on the defensive in all his battles; he was forced to arms under compulsion and to protect his life, which was sought with ruthless pertinacity by his enemies.

The verses quoted are very clear, and hardly require any explanation. It is apparent, that from the teachings of the Prophet no Muslim is permitted to bring any person into slavery, and that Islam and the Qur-án give no countenance to anything like the institution of slavery.

It is therefore apparent that a Muslim must fight a hard battle in self-defence, before he can be permitted to take prisoners of war, and that as regards such prisoners they are either to be set free or ransomed.

The Prophet adopted the former course in most cases; for instance, in the case of the prisoners of the Bani Mustalik a hundred families were set at liberty, and in the case of Hawazin [2] six thousand prisoners were released out of favour.

Those prisoners taken at Badr had to pay ransom because

[1] The Holy Qur-án, xlvii. 4.

[2] In the battle of Hunein six thousand of the tribe Hawazin were made captives, but as the order in which the two alternatives are placed in the above-quoted verse dealing with the emancipation of the war slaves (see above)—either "set them free as a favour or let them ransom themselves"— clearly shows that preference is given to the former course, the Holy Prophet kept waiting for some time for the survivors among the Hawazin to come and ask for the release of their prisoners, but no one turned up for about ten days, and the Prophet distributed the prisoners among the Muslim soldiers. After this, the Hawazins came and requested the Prophet to set their people free. The Prophet could not do so at that stage without the consent of their masters. He, however, ascended the pulpit and addressed the Muslims thus: "After due praise to God, I inform you that your brethren have come to you repentant, and I have come to the conclusion that their captives should be given back to them. Whoever of you, then, loves to do it as an act of kindness, let him do it, and whoever desires that he should be paid the ransom, him will we pay out of what God will give us." All in one voice obeyed the commandment of the Holy Prophet, and the prisoners were released without paying any ransom.—ED. *The Islamic Review.* (Bukhari.)

Islam was very weak at that time and the enemy was determined to crush it out of existence. But many among the Badr prisoners were released when, at the request of the Prophet, they taught reading and writing to his companions. When, after a succession of battles, the Prophet entered Mecca as undisputed victor, his very first act was that of the manumittor and enfranchiser, for he gave free pardon to all his enemies who were completely in his power and were indeed his prisoners of war and legitimate slaves. Not only did he do this, but he at once set about abolishing idolatry—that mental slavery of pagan races—and putting in its place the free, untrammelled worship of the ONE and ONLY GOD. He also abolished infanticide and regulated sex relationship—limiting a man's wives to four—indeed, he brought order out of chaos. His advent to Mecca and the magnificent example he set by pardoning all of his many thousands of enemies stands out like a beacon not only for Arabia but for the whole world and for all time.

To what heights it was possible for slaves to attain it is interesting to follow the history of Kutubuddin, one of the Emperors of Delhi. Kutubuddin, the founder of the Dynasty of the slaves, was a war-prisoner and, as such, a slave. But he won the favour of his master and became his successor. He himself had a war-prisoner, Shamshuddin Altamash, to whom his master gave his daughter in marriage. Not less than eight kings, most of whom were, like Kutubuddin, slaves in their youth, with all the pomp and dignity of absolute rulers, and the only queen who ruled at Delhi—Razia Begum —were also of the same Dynasty. The Kutub-Minar, a big tower of marble, which was built by the first slave king of India in the beginning of the thirteenth century, is a standing monument of the high position that Islam conferred upon slaves.

Subuktagin, the father of Muhammad of Gazni, the famous invader of India, was, again, a slave captured in the war by Aliptagin, the first king of the Gazni Dynasty, but became his successor as a king. There were slaves who led, as generals, Muslim armies which included scions of the best families, the aristocrats and the best blood in the country to victory.

It is not necessary to go into the far distant past for reference, for we have in modern times the Amir Abdul-rahman, the grandfather of the present Amir of Afghanistan, who had as his commander-in-chief his own slave. Another of his slaves filled the important post of High Treasurer. Yet another two of his slaves were given the highest positions under his rule. All this appears in his autobiography, and he states the facts in order to show what treatment a slave may aspire to, with a Muslim master, and under the Islamic Law.

All European scholars who have studied Islam with an unbiased mind have come to the conclusion that Islamic teachings do condemn slavery and aim at its abolition, and the only legal cause of bringing others into bondage is prisonership of war; and as long as war continues in the world the system must continue. I here give the opinion of Professor Snouck Hurgrorje, of the Leyden University, on the question of slavery in his book *Mahommedanism*, p. 150; published in 1916, Putnam's, U.S.A.

"The Law of Islam regulated the position of slaves with much equity; there is a great body of testimony from people who have spent a part of their lives among Muhammadan nations which does justice to the benevolent treatment which bondsmen receive from their masters there. Besides that, we are bound to state that in many Western countries, or countries under Western domination, whole groups of the population live under circumstances with which those of Muhammadan slavery may be compared with advantage.

"The only legal cause of slavery is prisonership of war, or born from slave parents. The captivity of enemies of Islam has not at all necessarily the effect of enslaving them; for the competent authorities may dispose of them in any other way, also in the way prescribed by modern international law or custom. In proportion to the realization of the political ideal of Islam, the number of its enemies must diminish and the possibility of enslaving men consequently decrease. Setting slaves free is one of the most meritorious works, and at the same time the regular atonement for certain transgressions of the sacred Law. According to the Muhammadan principle, slavery is an institution destined to disappear."

I should now like to say a few words as to the alleged atrocities on Armenian girls. Only a short time ago I was asked how it was that I who had been brought up a Christian could countenance and adhere to a religion such as Islam, which encouraged or permitted outrages on women. I at once joined issue on this question, and pointed out that Islam did not countenance or encourage in any way outrages of any such kind. No cruelty, injustice, or evil treatment could possibly be reconcilable with the Brotherhood of Islam as I understood it. There can be no palliation or excuse of any kind for the atrocities as described to me, and if they are true, not only I myself but all my Muslim acquaintances and friends will join with Christians or Jews or Hindus who are so opposed to brigandage and slave-dealing to assist in bringing to justice miscreants who have transgressed the Divine Law. It is, of course, impossible to deny that slave-dealing does go on, but under difficulties. British gunboats are not very friendly to the slave dhows, and all of us Britishers detest the slavers as we do the devil; and there is no doubt that any good Muslim detests what is evil just as much as a good Christian does.

So that if the perpetrators of these outrages are Muslims their conduct is non-Muslim, and the writer who describes them should not identify them with Muslims; but if the whole batch of stories is merely put together as propaganda work against Islam, I have no words strong enough to condemn such action. One does not like to think that educated people are to be found who will wilfully and knowingly make misstatements about another religion in order to further the interests of their own particular faith. I don't mind ignorance, but false information, deceit, and treachery in a cause which should be sacred are to my mind intolerable. Not long ago a lady assured me most positively that Muslims worshipped Muhammad, that all Muslims had to have four wives, that women had no souls and were not allowed inside the Mosques! *She* was quite sincere, but the educated man who gave her the faulty information was not sincere, and he misrepresented things in the mistaken idea that he was furthering the spread of his own particular faith. I presume he was influenced by

the doctrine of expediency which allows Machiavellian tactics in religion and everything else.

I should like here to quote the following from *India in the Balance*, by Al-Haj Khwaja Kamal-ud-Din : " The Turkish rule may not be a model, but the legends current concerning it for the last fifty years have proved, in the upshot, to be, after all, mere stories deliberately concocted of set purpose to promote a pretext for the dismemberment of Turkey. His Excellency M. Chedo Meyalovich, formerly Minister to the Court of St. James's and to the Sublime Porte, writing in the *Asiatic Quarterly* (October 1913), candidly admitted that " After Serbia had at last succeeded in realizing her ' aspirations ' so far as Turkey was concerned, *political interest* made us (the Balkan Nations) paint the Turks as cruel tyrants incapable of European civilization." An impartial history would prove that the Turks are rather Europeans than Asiatics, and that they are not cruel tyrants, but a nation loving justice and fairness, and possessing qualities and virtues which deserve to be acknowledged and respected. The italics furnish an eloquent explanation of the motives actuating those writers who have poured forth book after book to justify foreign interference in Turkey.

In conclusion, I may emphasize the fact that in common with many of my co-religionists I take the strongest exception to such terms as " Freed from the slavery of Islam," " Muslim slavery," etc. Such expressions are utterly undeserved, for all true Muslims regard with loathing the traffic in human lives, carried on by brutal slave-dealers, and deprecate with equal force any attempt to coerce women into joining harems in Turkey or anywhere else.

AL-HAJ AL-FAROOQ HEADLEY.

II

Slavery was another curse from which the world cried aloud for redemption at the advent of Islam. The evil had been blackening human character from the very beginning, preying on a large number of humanity, but it never appeared as an evil to those who came before Muhammad, to raise

mankind. For thousands of years the ignoble institution continued, sapping the lives of millions of the human race and reducing them to the most despicable conditions; yet successive civilizations, legislations, and religions did not think it worth while even to take notice of it, much less to contemplate its abolition. None of them even cared to do anything to ameliorate the condition of the poor victims to this ruthless institution. Nay, it was upheld by almost all of them. It needed, in fact, a God-consciousness in the human frame, which could feel for the misery and the pain of others—the victims of slavery—as one feels for himself; and history does not refer to any person with that psychology before the Prophet of Islam. It needed a super-mind to deal with a problem of such a gigantic nature (and with such multifarious issues involved in it) as that presented by the institution of slavery, when the Last Prophet appeared—an evil deeply rooted in all the nations of the world, honoured by time and respected by authority. Aristotle held slavery to be necessary and natural, and, under certain conditions, beneficial both to the slave and the master. After him, the Epicureans, the Stoics and other schools of thought in Greece, held the same opinion. The very system of Roman life made slavery a most essential institution, and in the view of some both natural and legitimate. We might reasonably look to Moses with eagerness, and expect him to do something towards its abolition, seeing that he had found his own race drinking to the very dregs of misery and cruelty under the bondage of Egypt; and moreover, a part of his mission was to liberate his people from slavery. But after they had been liberated, his laws meted out to others the same measure of slavery from which the Chosen People had been redeemed. Slavery was upheld, as we read in Deuteronomy. Though the treatment accorded to slaves under the Hebrew Law was comparatively mild, nevertheless the subsequent bondage of the Jews, under Nebuchadnezzar and others, made them treat their slaves in the same way, as they had been treated by their captors.

Slavery existed in its worst shape, alike in quality and quantity, when Jesus appeared. The ratio of the free popu-

lation to slaves in Italy between 146 B.C. and A.D. 235 was 1 to 3, their respective numbers being about 6,944,000 and 20,832,000. A freed man of the time of Augustus left as many as 4,116 slaves by his will. The slave trade was carried on extensively everywhere. Under the Roman Empire the master had absolute authority over his slaves, and could even put them to death at his will. The construction of roads, the cleansing of sewers and the maintenance of aqueducts were the common employment. Personal chastisements or banishments from the town house to rural occupations were among the lighter punishments. Employment in the mill, relegation to the mines or quarries, men and women in chains, working half-naked under the lash, guarded by soldiers, slaves brought to obedience to their masters by means of systematic terrorism, gladiatorial combats, fights with wild beasts in the amphitheatres, internment in subterranean cells or exposure to the inclemency of the weather, while fixed in dirty fish-ponds, slave maidens shockingly subjected to the brutality of their masters contributing to the impurities at that period and disgracing society—all these were common occurrences in Roman life. Seneca, just before the coming of Jesus, had raised his voice against these horrors; but his cry proved a cry in the wilderness, for the Western world, where this abominable institution was playing the greatest havoc with humanity, found its attention absorbed by the appearance of another great personality—the so-called God Incarnate, who, in the person of Jesus, came, as some say, to redeem the whole human race. He was declared to be the Saviour of the world. The least that could be said of his mission, he himself summed up in his own words—"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But who other than a slave could be imagined as undergoing the more oppressive kinds of labour in the days of Jesus? Who other than a bondsman could be rightly considered as heavy laden, or could have a better claim to the "rest" so proffered by Jesus? Did Jesus put these words into practice in the case of those in the most inhuman forms of bondage?

The condition of slaves was at its worst when Jesus is

reported to have uttered these words, yet we do not find a tittle or a jot in his utterances enjoining compassionate treatment towards slaves, much less any hint as to their emancipation; nay, he did not say a single word against the tortures inflicted on this most miserable class. He did not concern himself with them, though they were not beyond his knowledge. Perhaps they were "dogs" and "swine"; but there were slaves among his own people. Even they could not excite a sufficient degree of compassion to say anything on their behalf. It is surprising to find Christian writers, even in these days of light and culture, blaming our Prophet for not abolishing slavery. Some, like Professor D. S. Margoliouth, go so far as to say that the idea of the abolition of slavery did not occur to Muhammad. These men ought to know better, and should respect the decency of a writer. They should appreciate that there are others as well who could easily test the truth of their assertions. It would have been more appropriate for Professor Margoliouth and those of his way of thinking, to say the same about their own god, who never raised his voice against the cruel treatment of slaves or against the disgraceful traffic so prevalent in his own time. This serious omission on the part of Jesus made Christianity, as a religion, quite indifferent for centuries to the severe tortures and the degraded position of the enormous slave population, and subsequently it produced among its followers slave-dealers of the worst type, who indulged in all possible inhumanities towards this unfortunate class as late as the dawn of the eighteenth century. Reform, however, had begun before Christianity became a dominant religion in the Roman Empire. Hadrian, who came to the throne in A.D. 117, made a start by curtailing the sources of slavery, and forbidding the kidnapping and sale of children under penalty of death. He took from masters the power of life and death, and abolished the subterranean prisons. Even an emperor like Nero (A.D. 54–68) had already ordered the courts to receive complaints by slaves of ill-treatment. The relations between the slaves and their masters had begun to come more directly under the surveillance of law and public opinion. But the salubrious wave of reform, the mitigation of the harshness of treatment

which the vile abuses of the institution had caused, was impeded when the Pagan rule gave way to the Christian regime. Constantine came and renewed some of the old practices abolished by Hadrian and others. Slavery again began to flourish, and continued so in Christendom for centuries. But the hunting and stealing of human beings to make them slaves was greatly aggravated by the demand of the European colonies. Africa was the popular field for this man-hunting. "The native chiefs engaged in forays, sometimes even on their own subjects, for the purpose of procuring slaves, to be exchanged for Western commodities. They often set fire to a village at night and captured the inhabitants when trying to escape. Thus all that was shocking in the barbarism of Africa was multiplied and intensified by this foreign stimulation."

Germany, France and Spain all participated in the slave-trade. Captain John Hawkins was the first Englishman who engaged in the traffic. The English slave-traders were at first altogether occupied in supplying the Spanish settlements, but afterwards they began to supply their own colonies. The trade in England remained exclusively in the hands of companies for a long time, but in the reign of William and Mary it became open to all subjects of the Crown, though large parliamentary grants were made to the African Company. By the Treaty of Utrecht, the contract for supplying the Spanish colonies with negroes, which had previously passed from Dutch hands to the French, was transferred to Great Britain. In 1739 the contract was revoked—a circumstance that brought forth war with Spain. Between 1680 and 1700, 300,000 negroes were exported by the British African Company and other private adventurers. Between 1700 and the end of 1786, 610,000 were brought to Jamaica alone, the annual average to all the British colonies being 20,095. The British slave-trade was carried on principally from Liverpool, London, Bristol and Lancaster. The entire number of slave-ships sailing from these ports was 192, and in them space was provided for the transport of 47,146 negroes. In 1791 the number of European factories on the coast of Africa was 40; of these, 14 were English, 3 French, 15 Dutch, 4 Portuguese

and 4 Danish. More than half the slave-trade was in British hands. Things went on till the middle of the eighteenth century, when public opinion became awakened against the ignoble trade. But it needed more than half a century to make that public opinion fully alive to the urgency of the question; and an enactment in 1811 brought the slave-trade to an end as far as the British Dominions were concerned. In the Danish possessions the traffic ceased in 1802. At the Congress of Vienna in 1814 the principle was acknowledged that the slave-trade should be abolished as soon as possible. In short, the slave traffic continued in various Christian countries up to 1850. The statistics I have taken from the *Encyclopædia Britannica*.

I have just remarked that the movements towards reforming slavery, initiated by some of the later Pagan Emperors of Rome, were stifled in the reign of Constantine, the first Christian Emperor. Christendom since then continued to favour this horrible institution, and it was simply owing to the influence of Christian peoples on their Muslim neighbours that slavery did not die its natural death so soon as designed by Islam; and if Africa still supplies slaves to others, it remains only as a sequence of the trade started and carried on vigorously by the European nations on the African coasts, as said before. Christianity, in short, did nothing either to abolish or to mitigate the cruelties of slavery. Those among the Christian writers who have written on the subject have admitted it, though in an apologetic way. The Rev. Mr. Hughes says: "Although slavery has existed side by side with Christianity, it is undoubtedly contrary to the spirit of the teaching of our Divine Lord, who has given to the world the grand doctrine of universal brotherhood." [1] I wish Jesus

[1] The quotation reminds me of the oft-repeated phrases—"Christian spirit," "Christian morals," "Christian teachings," etc.—which always come to the aid of the adherents of Christianity when they seek to claim such of these things for themselves as appeal to them for the time being though they fail to find them in their Scriptures. Jesus was a Prophet, and can be believed to have possessed good and noble qualities and to have taught those things. But it is, after all, a belief, and should not be confused with facts. His teachings, as narrated in the Bible, cannot be taken as supplying a complete religion. Moreover, he himself admits that he did not give the whole truth.* On the

* St. John xvi.

had done so, and in terms clear enough for his followers to act upon. A Prophet solely and wholly interested in the "lost sheep" could not be expected even to think of matters of universal bearing. Apart from other considerations, it did not occur to him to think of the slaves amongst his own people. In his own lifetime he did not concern himself with people other than those of the house of Jacob, and the contrary report of St. Mark is decidedly spurious. Jesus is not with us to-day, but those who pass under his name, and should be expected to imbue themselves with his spirit, treat others as "swine" and "dogs"; and though they do not apply the word "slave" to any people, nevertheless the word "native," for all the implications it conveys to the Westerner, can rightly be bracketed with the word "slave." It is absurd to say that Jesus or his teaching ever had anything to do

other hand, if the Christian spirit is that which can be inferred from the spirit of Christ's Church, it is not such as to do credit to that Church's founder. The beautiful of yesterday is the ugly of to-day; which things being so, it is hard to define the Christian spirit. The phrase, as used from time to time, seems to be sufficiently plastic to accord with any and every condition. Whatever appears to be desirable for the time being is at once claimed under one or other of these convenient phrases. The spirit of Christ may be taken to comprehend everything; but his own Church, though filled with the Holy Ghost, as they believe, has ever remained too dense to appreciate it. Her spirit has, throughout the ages, been anything but meekness, mercy and long-suffering. For about seventeen centuries the Creed of Saint Athanasius has been sung and said on the Holy Feasts, under the authority of the Church. Does that Creed reflect the spirit of Christ, when it evinces a universal, damnatory spirit at its very outset, where it says: "without doubt he shall perish everlastingly"? To-day the laity come forward to denounce it and demand its elimination from the Book of Common Prayer. The new house of laity of the Church of England met a few days ago at Church House, Westminster, to conclude its deliberations on the proposed measure for the revision of the Prayer Book. Among other things—

"Mr. C. Marston moved an amendment to leave out the words 'which faith, except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly,' from the Athanasian Creed. He said he did not propose to eliminate the Creed altogether, but he wanted to take out of it the most terrible sentence which he believed had ever appeared in all history—and this in a book which pretended to supply the gospel of salvation of sinners. The Athanasian Creed was composed in an age that was comparatively reckless of human life; and it was put into our Prayer Book in its present form at a time when recklessness of human life was still very much to the front.

"Sir George King said he thought most of the members in charge considered that it was no business of the House to alter the creeds.

with the question of slavery. Those who passed under his name, only a century before, committed more wrong in this respect than any other people in the world.

Muhammad (may his memory be ever green) was the first man in the history of the world who felt commiseration for the slave class. He did so in a degree that was not even imagined by his predecessors in history; and Islam, his religion, was the first creed that made the liberation of slaves a matter of great virtue, and preached abolition of slavery. In fact, it changed the whole aspect of the world in this respect. This I say advisedly, and I challenge our opponents to say anything against it.

Muhammad was neither a man of dreams nor a visionary. He was a man of action, and knew how to work rightly in the world. He would not confine himself to orations and homilies; he would survey the whole situation; he would appreciate all the obstacles in his way; he would then adopt

There was a great deal to be said by way of explanation on matters which apparently were misunderstood by some people.

"Sir Edward Clarke said the Athanasian Creed had spoiled the happiness of services for him on the great festivals of the Church for years and years. 'I have never said it,' he added, 'and would never dream of saying it. It has been a distress to me to hear choirs singing at the top of their voices these awful words, which I do not believe, and which I am sure ought not to be in our service.'

"Sir Robert Williams said he thought it was quite time the laity made their protest against the use of these damnatory clauses.

"Mr. Marston's amendment was carried. The question, however, remains open, and will come up before the House for final approval."

The damnatory clause is doomed now, seeing that the protest against it comes from influential quarters among the laity. Similar protests got rid of a certain notorious psalm in the days of the war. But is it the spirit of Christ, or the spirit of modern civilization, that cries out against such cruel expressions? If it is the former, it has remained dormant for centuries, and its revival is simply to pamper the spirit of all-sufficiency. Candidly speaking, there is very little in the teachings of Jesus to meet the ups and downs of life. To make it elastic to suit everything and anything is simply to fish out authority for our deeds, no matter what their merits may be. But for such free interpretations the world would have been saved from the countless cruelties committed by the Church in the name of Jesus.

In fact, nothing could in decency be claimed as Christian verity if it be not laid down in clear terms in the sayings of Jesus. If the offending phrase in the Athanasian Creed has been allowed to remain for centuries in the Book of Common Prayer, is not a man of independent views justified in classing the spirit of Christ as identical with that of indifference to human life?

means efficacious enough to bring out the best results. The problem of slavery and its abolition confronted him as the most stupendous task ever coped with by single individual efforts. Slavery was a most popular institution upheld by usage and past civilization everywhere; it supplied a most valuable form of property. It was interwoven with various aspects of the then social life, and its abolition would strike at the very foundation of the social fabric. Besides, the institution was in some respects not without redeeming features, and therefore could not be dispensed with totally. Among its various sources, war was perhaps the most prominent. War, as yet, has not left the human race, and the only conceivable check to it would be to award, where possible, some deterrent punishment to the aggressor, when defeated. In olden days the males of the defeated camp were killed and mutilated; later on they were taken as slaves, and this was not a bad substitute for slaughter and mutilation. Indemnity, or captivity, came to be regarded as the natural demand of a conqueror from the vanquished; and modern civilization upholds it as well. But the inhuman treatment awarded to captives everywhere in the pre-Islamic world made war-bondage identical with slavery. War-prisonership was indispensable, but something was needed to better the condition of the captives in order to save them the indignity which the very word "slave" in itself has always conveyed. In other words, if the institution of war-bondage was a necessary appendage to human society, then some step must be taken that might ennoble such bondsmen in the eyes of their captors. [1]

The Qur-án, to begin with, abolished all kinds of slavery, with the sole exception of the bondage that resulted from fighting, provided that fighting was in self-defence. In other words, a Muslim has been forbidden, under the clear teaching of the Qur-án, to make others his slaves; he may make prisoners of others, but only in a self-defensive fight. In order to make distinction between the two—the slave and the war-captive—the Qur-án does not style the latter *abad*, the Arabic equivalent of the word "slave." "Those whom your

[1] See p. 7, also Qur-án, xlvii. 4, viii. 67.

right hands possess" is the term used by the Qur-án to designate that class. It not only defines the exclusive mode in which a man could be brought under a Muslim's bondage, but it shows also that a Muslim's bondsman is not a slave, but a fallen foe, otherwise his equal, and that he should either be ransomed or set free out of favour; and the latter was the course which was in most cases adopted by the Prophet himself.[1] When the Qur-án and the Prophet use the word *abad*—slave—as regards persons in bondage, it should be remembered that the reference in such case is only to such as were already in bondage under the old custom. As to the liberation of such bondsmen, this presented a difficulty of a very intricate nature. The immediate abolition of slavery was likely to cause many and far-reaching complications. The slave class possessed no wealth. They had neither house nor property, trade nor learning. Their immediate emancipation would have produced a class of penniless vagabonds and indolent beggars, seeing that their lifelong habit of abject dependence on their masters had killed all initiative in them. The task of Islam was not only to secure freedom for those already in slavery, but to make them useful members of society. And the Holy Prophet was quite alive to the situation.

Consider the generations of men who worked to abolish slavery in this country alone. Thrice a Bill was introduced into Parliament, and thrice it was rejected. Consider the amount of money that England and other countries had to pay in order to bring the slave-trade to an end. England had to pay three hundred thousand pounds to the Portuguese for giving up the trade in the north of the Equator. She paid Spain an indemnity of four hundred thousand pounds to bring the Spanish trade to an end, and an enormous sum went to pay off the companies and private adventurers, including the Church.

The Holy Prophet was not the owner of gold and silver, but he possessed an inexhaustible treasure of the soul and mind; and he did in this respect that which filthy lucre could not do. The most deep-rooted evils were swept off

[1] See page 7.

before his mighty word as a straw before a strong gale. It has already been stated elsewhere that the Qur-án and the Prophet made the liberation of the slave a matter of great virtue.[1] A portion of the public money was set aside for this purpose.[2] It was also declared to be a good atonement for many minor transgressions. But it was chiefly three considerations—(1) the socially elevated position of the slaves, (2) the treatment of equality that could be demanded by the slaves from their masters, and (3) the strict restrictions against harsh treatment—that led to the uprooting of the evil and paved the way to its ultimate abolition.

In order to create fraternal feeling between master and slave, the Holy Prophet said: "Verily your brothers are your slaves; God has placed them under you. Whoever, then, has his brother under him, he should feed with food of which he himself eats, and clothe him with such clothing as he himself wears. And do not impose on him a duty which is beyond his power to perform; or if you command them to do what they are unable to do, then assist them in that affair."[3] This principle of brotherhood between master and slave, which was worked out to the very letter, evinces that largeness of soul that has been met with in no other philanthropist or founder of a religion. In order to raise the status of the class, the Prophet laid special stress upon the good breeding and education of slave-girls. The Holy Prophet said: "If a man has a slave-girl in his possession and he instructs her in polite accomplishments and gives her a good education,

[1] See page 4.

[2] See page 4. The following saying of the Holy Prophet is recorded in Bukhari: "Whoever frees a Muslim slave, God shall protect, every one of his limbs from fire for every limb of the slave set free." Bará, son of 'Azih, reports that a person came to the Holy Prophet (may peace and the blessings of God be upon him) and said to him: "Point out to me a deed which should bring me nearer to paradise and take me farther away from fire." The Holy Prophet said: "Free a slave and ransom a captive." There is also a tradition which says that "the most beloved of all deeds with God is the freeing of a slave." Emancipation of slaves was especially enjoined on particular occasions. "Asma, daughter of Abu Bakr, reports," says Bukhari, "that we were enjoined to free slaves whenever there was an eclipse."

[3] Almost all the traditions quoted in this paper have been taken from Bukhari.

without inflicting any chastisement upon her, and then frees her and marries her, he shall be rewarded with a double reward." This should be compared with the Roman and Christian [1] ordinances in this respect which prohibited marriage between slaves and freemen. Mr. Lane, in his *Arabian Nights*, bears testimony to the good treatment which has been awarded to this class in high Egyptian families. "They are," he says, "often instructed in plain needlework and embroidery, and sometimes in music and dancing. Formerly many of them possessed literary accomplishments, to quote largely from esteemed poets or even to compose extempore verses." The Holy Prophet, in fact, made the position of the slave enviable when he said that had it not been for such and such a thing "I would have loved to live and die a slave." In this one sentence there is a volume in which may be read the sincerest desire of the speaker to raise the position of the most despicable class in the world. Is it, then, a matter of surprise that we find in Islam the slave of to-day becoming the Grand Vizier of to-morrow, as has been illustrated by Lord Headley in his masterly paper on the subject.[2] The Prophet used to say: "Let no one of you say, when addressing his bondsman, 'Abdi'—(my slave)—or 'Amti'—(my maid-servant), but let him say, 'my young man,' 'my young maid,' 'my young boy.'" Once he remarked: "Verily my friend Gabriel continued to enjoin kindness to slaves, until I thought that people should never be taken as slaves or servants." These were not lip homilies, but were meant to be brought into most literal practice. On one occasion he gave away a war-prisoner to one of his companions, enjoining him to treat the captive kindly. When the companion went to his wife and informed her of the Holy Prophet's gift, as well as of his injunction, his wife said to him: "Thou canst not carry out this injunction fully, except thou free the slave." Thereupon the captive was set free.

"Fear God in the matter of prayer and in the matter of those whom your right hand possesses," were the words repeated by the Holy Prophet on his death-bed, which show that no one else could feel so great an anxiety for the slave

[1] See page 2. [2] See page 8.

class. These are the last words he uttered; and mark how he makes the duty of being constant in prayer identical with kindness to slaves. One can multiply instance after instance in his precepts and examples showing how he abhorred ill-treatment of slaves, and I quote one of his well-known dicta which sums them all up. He said: "He who beats his slave without fault or slaps him on the face, his atonement for this is freeing him." Abu Masood, one of the Ansar—the Medinite—says: "I was beating a slave of mine, when I heard behind me a voice: 'Know, O Abu Masood, God is more powerful over thee than thou art over him.' I turned back and saw the Holy Prophet of God, and at once said: 'O Prophet of God, he is now free, for the sake of God.' The Holy Prophet said: 'If thou hadst not done it, verily fire would have touched thee.'" Ill-treatment of a slave was sufficient grounds for his enfranchisement; and some slaves would go so far as actually to create circumstances likely to excite the anger of their masters, in the hope of being ill-treated by them, thus gaining their freedom. It is related of Zainulabidin that he had a slave who seized a sheep and broke its leg, and he said to him: "Why didst thou do this?" The slave answered: "To provoke thee to anger." "And I," said he, "will provoke to anger him who taught thee; and he is Iblis (i.e. the Devil); go, and be free for the sake of God."

Among the evils of the institution was the custom of making slave girls act as prostitutes, in order to profit by their ignoble earnings.[1] It was strictly prohibited. The evil of concubinage was removed by making rightful wedlock an essential for cohabitation with women in bondage.[2] Marriage with slave girls was encouraged, and such an alliance paved the way for emancipation. In this respect, the Qur-án says: "And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want, out of His Grace; and Allah is amply-giving, knowing . . . and do not compel your slave girls to prostitution."[1] Equality in the treatment of their bondsmen by the masters became a

[1] The Holy Qur-án, xxiv. 33. [2] *Ibid.*, iv. 3.

common incident, even during the lifetime of the Prophet. It is related that Abu Hurrera, a companion of the Prophet, saw upon one occasion a man riding, with the slave running after him. The companion said to the man: "Take him behind thee, on thy beast, O servant of God; verily he is thy brother, and his soul is like thy soul." It reminds me of an incident concerning the Caliph Omar that shows how literally the early Muslims obeyed the orders of their Prophet. When Jerusalem was besieged, the Commander of the Faithful was requested to come in person to the beleaguered city, because the Chief Patriarch of Jerusalem had declared his willingness to surrender if Omar personally came thither and settled the terms of peace. In this journey from Medina to Jerusalem the Caliph was accompanied by his servant; but they had only the one camel for riding. So they rode by turns until they reached Jerusalem. It happened that at the last stage of the journey it was the turn of the servant to ride. They reached the camp of the Muslim general, Abu Obeida, while the slave was on the camel and the Caliph running after it. The General, fearing that the Caliph might be looked upon with contempt by the besieged, submitted that it did not become the Caliph to run in that way, while his servant was riding. Upon this, the Caliph remarked: "None hath said the like before thee, and this thy word will bring a curse upon the Muslims. Verily we were the most degraded of peoples and the most despiteful and fewest of all. God gave us honour and greatness through Islam, and if we seek it now in other ways than those enjoined by Islam, God will again bring us into disgrace." Can anyone refer to any conqueror or any ruler even of the smallest state, in the course of history, who showed such moral courage, or meted out such kind treatment to his servants? Omar did not care even to keep his prestige in the eye of the besieged. Is there a single country on the surface of the earth where servants are treated like this by such mighty masters as the Caliph Omar? And if the Muslims of later days wandered from this straight course, it is as the Caliph Omar has said, "they sought honour in other directions than that pointed out by Islam, and they lost it."

High positions were not denied to slaves and freedmen. The Prophet gave his own cousin, the Lady Zainab, in marriage to his freedman and made his son Usama commander of an army.

I have just mentioned that the immediate emancipation of the slaves would have brought more harm to them than benefit, seeing that under the conditions which that class throughout the world then laboured, slaves neither owned any property nor had skill in any handicraft which might afford them a means of livelihood. It was necessary that they should be taught some method of getting a living, and upon this vital necessity the Prophet laid special stress. Masters were enjoined to give good breeding and education to their slaves; and if any slave had demanded manumission, the master must yield to that demand, under certain conditions. On this point the Qur-án says: "And to those of your slaves who desire a deed of manumission, execute it for them, if you know good is in them, and give them the property which God has given you."[1] The words "if you know good is in them" were explained by the Holy Prophet to mean, If you know they are good in some handicraft, by which they can gain their subsistence, so that they are not left to be a burden upon society.

The execution of a deed of manumission was compulsory when the slave applied for it, and it should be noted that the verse requires that the master should give the slave a portion of his wealth so that he might be able to make a start in life as a respectable person. The Holy Qur-án also enjoined masters to assist their slaves in gaining their emancipation. The words: "and give them the property which God has given you," makes the monetary assistance of the slave a necessity. In the case of a deed of manumission, such assistance took the form of the remission of a portion of the amount fixed upon for ransom. Muslims are also urged in this verse to contribute towards the sum which the slave has to pay. The Holy Prophet himself assisted Suliman of Persia in getting his freedom, by planting three hundred palm-trees with his own hands. It was one of the conditions of manumission;

[1] The Holy Qur-án, xxiv. 33.

the other condition was the payment of a sum for which subscription was raised and Suliman got his liberty. The Lady Ayesha, the wife of the Prophet, similarly assisted a female slave in getting her freedom. In short, the ransoming of a captive is one of the highest forms of virtue, according to the Qur-án. The slave is not left alone to labour for his manumission. It is the duty of his master and other Muslims to assist him. Besides manumission, there are other cases in which the emancipation of a slave is compulsory. To be beaten by his master resulted in the freedom of the slave. To this I have already alluded. When a female slave was taken as wife by her master, and gave birth to a child, she was no more treated as a slave; and after her husband's death she was a free woman. When a slave was the common property of several masters, one such master could free him, paying the others to the extent of their shares. In such cases when a slave was freed someone was appointed as his patron (*mowla*), whose duty it was to provide the freed slave with the means of starting in the world, and to support him in his difficulties. The slave was called his freedman. Zamba, one of the Companions of the Prophet, caught his slave red-handed committing a heinous crime, and mutilated him. The slave ran to the Prophet and complained against the master, who was also summoned. The Prophet heard the whole case, and said to the slave, while giving his judgment: "Go, thou art freed." Then the slave said: "O Prophet of God, whose freedman shall I be called?" "The freedman of God and His Prophet." Accordingly he and his family were granted maintenance during the lifetime of the Prophet and also after him. In the days of Omar he was given a grant of land in Egypt. All these facts and those mentioned by Lord Headley can mostly be found in Bukhari. Can it, therefore, be said with any shadow of sincerity that the idea of the abolition of slavery never occurred to the Prophet, or that it was Islam that engrafted slavery on humanity? And yet this is what I read in the writings of Christian critics on Islam. Professor Margoliouth must revise his statements on this subject before he can justly claim to rank as an authority on Islam. Dr. Winnington-Ingram, Bishop of London, also

seems to entertain erroneous views concerning the Muslim attitude towards slavery. But he must know that, from Moses up to Jesus, no prophet, nor yet the Redeemer of humanity (as Jesus is called by his followers), ever troubled to concern himself with the slaves and their misfortunes. The ignoble institution synchronized with the human race almost from its beginning, and yet, for the benefit of the Bishop of London, I say that no prophet of the world ever dreamt of dealing with it. Is it not, then, a wonderful thing to find Muhammad not only the first, but the last as well, among the human race, who did what was necessary in this respect, and does not this one circumstance justify his claim to be the Apostle of God? It should, however, be admitted that slavery has not yet died the natural death designed for it by Islam, and negroes are still to be seen in certain wealthy Arab houses; but responsibility for this will be found to lie at other doors, if once the question be dispassionately considered in the light of the facts given above. Islam abolished all the sources of slavery except war-captivity; and if, as it is reasonable to hold, this kind of bondage cannot properly be brought under the category of slavery, it is safe to assert that the Holy Prophet banished slavery from Muslim lands, where it is unknown to this day. It is the nations of Europe who revived it in Africa, for the purpose of supplying labour in the Colonies. African so-called "savages," bordering barbarism, were easily induced by Christian exploiters to sell their own countrymen. Try to imagine what could be the after-effects of the working of forty factories on the nascent minds of the poor ignorant negroes. The factories, no doubt, closed down a century ago; not so the evil tendencies of the negro chief to enrich himself by selling his own people to others—tendencies awakened in the first instance by Christian exploitation. Islam, however, is making headway in Africa to-day, and as Bishop Fogarty of Damaraland, while speaking of the recent Islamic progress in South Africa and its salubrious effect there, also remarked, and very rightly: "It will make a real sense of brotherhood. The universal brotherhood established by Islam only, in the world, is a potent factor for bringing slavery to an end, though war-captivity will, on the

other hand, continue as long as war exists in the world. But I would ask my Arab co-religionists to reflect that if they purchase slaves from these negro lands they are acting against the teachings of their own Prophet."

I cannot conclude the subject without saying a few words as to "The White Slave Traffic Market" alleged to exist somewhere in the lands of the Turks. The fact is, of course, that no such market exists there, and this statement I desire to emphasize. A century ago London used to be a popular market for negro slaves, and it began to revert to its old tradition in the early years of the present century. This time, the victims of the trade were the English girls. The trade was carried on clandestinely, and without the knowledge of the unfortunate girls, who, under varying pretences, were enticed on board ships that carried them to far-off continents. There they were removed from one town to another and placed in the houses of ill-fame, and all beyond the control of the law and the police—to pander to the worst type of human brutality and lust. It was a horrible revelation to me to know that such an unimaginable thing was possible and actually being carried on in Christian lands by the Christians in the present days of culture and enlightenment. I used to hear and read about it with horror in 1912, and it surprised me that the Church did not raise its voice against it. But the war came with its sweeping insistence to claim all our attention. I wonder if the ignoble traffic has come to an end, though attention has been diverted from it to another channel, and we are told of a white slave traffic in Turkish lands with Armenian girls as its victims. Nothing is impossible on this earth of God, but the very mention of the Armenian name—and that to substantiate some alleged Turkish atrocity —divests the charge of its claim to command any serious attention. This race, used as a cat's-paw by the European, must have perished by this time, and become a thing of the past, if the stories of their slaughter by the Turks had been true; but they proved to be propagandists' fiction, produced by Christian writers to blackguard Turkey. The present campaign also, in some of its features, savours of the same thing. Islam is asserting itself everywhere in the Western

world and the Western world is awake to the fact. All the nonsense spread abroad by Christian missionaries against Islam is now being appreciated at its real value by the laity of England. People have begun to appreciate Islam in its true colours, and the enemies' camp under these circumstances must do something against Islam.

The *Slave Market News*, the official organ of the new movement, makes reflections on Islam of a nature that betrays, even in the eyes of a Western reader, only the ignorance and prejudice of the asperser. In its November issue of 1924 I read an article with the heading "The Slave Woman under Islamic Sacred Law." The writer seems to know more of our home life than we do. But he must know that a Muslim wife is the sovereign of the family. The Qur-án gives her rights which a woman under Christianity cannot imagine. The writer begins thus: "But if the position of the wife is that of a mere chattel in the hands of her husband, how infinitely worse is the position of the slave woman under the Qur-án"; and the article contains a sprinkling of sentences like this: "The unutterable cruelties which Mohammed allowed his followers to inflict on conquered nations in the taking of slaves have indeed lasted until this day, and *are countenanced by the Qur-án.*" The calumny, in fact, reaches its climax in the words italicized in the above. It is a piece of barefaced mendacity. The writer asserts that which is nowhere to be found in the Qur-án. But there is something in the article which seems to explain things a little; to let, as it were, the cat out of the bag. For example, it says: "Grave warnings are sent from South Africa as to the real danger that exists there for white girls and children (whether English or Dutch) of being trapped and converted by Mohammedans." Here we see what is at the bottom of the whole campaign. The real danger is a conversion of the Christians to Islam. It is this that troubles the mind of the writer. Islam and Christianity face each other in the open arena. Let them fight on their own merits. But the Christian cleric knows his weakness. In his own country he finds his dogmas collapsing. He knows that the foreign missions have been a failure, and his creed has no appeal even to the uncul-

tured African. The propagandists must do something to save the situation. They must raise some hue and cry, and so we get the " Menace of Islam "—a popular headline in Christian newspapers. A well-known Bishop must needs make out a case for Christianity and excite a crusade against Islam, by asserting that conversion to Islam means the creation of disaffection in the coloured races against the white ; which may lead to world-wide war, as the Bishop thinks, and the only remedy, to his mind, whereby the danger may be averted is the Christianization of South Africa. Bishop Fogarty of Damaraland, and Dr. Zwemer and the rest, are harping on the like theme in various keys. Are we not then justified in appraising the cry in the *Slave Market News* as a part of the same concerted piece ?

The fact that we find a gentleman of Dr. Ingram's calibre interested in the movement is its redeeming feature, though it is surprising to note that the white slave traffic carried on to pander to the lewdness of the debauchees of other continents did not appear to arouse active resentment from that quarter. We are ready to raise a voice against every kind of atrocity, whether against a Muslim or a non-Muslim, and to condemn its perpetrators, be they our own brethren in faith or not. We assure Dr. Ingram that our sympathies are with him, if his is the right cause. Let a Christian conscience slumber in face of the most inhuman and flagrant atrocities to which Muslim women and girls were subjected by the brutal Greek in Anatolia and Smyrna in 1922 ; let the Church of Christ remain callous to the inhumanities of a Christian general in Amritsar (India) in 1919, but a Muslim conscience must condemn every kind of atrocity from whatever person and against whatsoever quarter it may come.

The question of the Armenian slave girls in Turkish houses, however, raises another issue for his lordship's consideration. The Armenians were in the Great War fighting against the Turks. Are not these Armenian girls, as war-captives, subject to all the consequences attending war-captivity in Islam ? The laws of Islam in this respect are most humane, and an Armenian girl, if in such a position, must receive the best of

treatment. In conclusion, I will say somewhat to my Muslim brothers, in the words of Syed Ameer Ali, as follows :—

" The time is now arrived when humanity at large should raise its voice against the practice of servitude, in whatsoever shape or under whatever denomination it may be disguised, The Muslims especially, for the honour of their Great Prophet. should try to efface that dark page from their history—a page which would never have been written but for their contravention of the spirit of his laws, however bright it may appear by the side of the ghastly scrolls on which the deeds of the professors of the rival creeds are recorded. The day is come when the voice that proclaimed liberty, equality and universal brotherhood among all mankind should be heard with the fresh vigour acquired from the spiritual existence and spiritual pervasion of fourteen centuries. It remains for the Muslims to show the falseness of the aspersions cast on the memory of the great and noble Prophet ; by proclaiming in explicit terms that slavery is reprobated by their faith and discountenanced by their code." [1]

KHWAJA KAMAL-UD-DIN.

Extract from THE ISLAMIC REVERENCE FOR WOMEN.
By LORD HEADLEY.

There is a saying of which we Muslims are very fond —it has been handed down through countless generations—" Paradise lies at the feet of thy mother " ; and if this saying means anything, it means that a Muslim's veneration for the women who have borne him and have suffered so much in bringing him safely into the world is very deep and real. That the Holy Prophet Muhammad placed the greatest weight and importance on the fair and kind treatment of women is shown not only by his acts during his life, but in the numerous sayings he left behind when he passed

[1] *Spirit of Islam*, p. 263.

from this earth. I here reproduce a few noteworthy selections in the hope that they will enlighten those who are at present in ignorance as to the Prophet's true character—he was just and lenient to all in his family and kind to animals also :—

1. Women are the twin-halves of men.
2. The best of you is he who behaves best to his household.
3. The world and all things in it are valuable ; but the most valuable thing in the world is a virtuous wife.
4. When a woman observes the prescribed prayers and fasts the month of Ramsan, and is chaste, and is not disobedient to her husband, then tell her to enter Paradise by whichever gate she chooses.
5. The great Prophet abhorred the idea of beating women : " Those men who beat their wives do not behave well. He is not of my way who teaches a woman to stray."
6. He is of the most perfect Muslims whose disposition is most liked by his own family.
7. The best of you are they who behave best to their wives.
8. The thing which is lawful, but disliked by God, is divorce.
9. God enjoins upon you to treat women well, for they are your mothers, daughters, and aunts.
10. The rights of women are sacred. See that women are maintained in the rights granted to them.
11. A virtuous wife is a man's best treasure.
12. Do not prevent your women from coming to the Mosque.
13. Admonish your wives with kindness.
14. Asked what treatment should be meted out to a wife, the Prophet answered : " Give her to eat when you eat yourself and clothe her when you clothe yourself ; and do not slap her in the face nor abuse her, not separate yourself from her in displeasure."
15. Give your wife good counsel, and do not beat your noble wife like a slave.
16. If a woman undertakes more than one day's journey some of her male relations should accompany her.

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